

REMARKS

Claims 2, 3, 19-24 and 31-34 are pending in this application, of which claims 20, 21, 33 and 35 have been amended. No new claims have been added.

(1) Claims 33 and 35 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. The term “small” has been deleted in this Response. Reconsideration of the rejection is respectfully requested.

(2) Claims 2, 3, 20-22 and 31-35 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Raimondi (U.S. Patent No. 6,216,572 B1).

Claims 20 and 21 have been amended to incorporate the limitations which are supported at page 16, line 9 to page 17, line 11. In amended claims 20 and 21, the travelling body travels among the product-housing section, the material-housing section and the table. The gripping means with the travelling body feeds the material workpiece from the material-housing section to the table, and ejects the machined product workpiece from the table to the product-housing section. The workpiece-feeding device feeds the material workpiece from the table to the machining section and ejects the machined product workpiece from the machine section to the table.

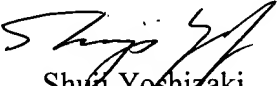
The Examiner indicates: that the worktable 4 corresponds to the claimed machining section; that the store 21 corresponds to the claimed material housing section; that the store 22 corresponds to the claimed product-housing section; that the gripping device 17 corresponds to the claimed travelling body; and that the rail 16 and carriage 14 correspond to the claimed workpiece-feeding device. However, the gripping device 17, rail 16 and carriage 14 are provided for directly feeding the material workpiece from the store 21 to the worktable 4 and for directly ejecting the machined product workpiece from the worktable 4 to the store 22. Raimondi does not disclose a table to relay the material workpieces and machined product workpieces, and a workpiece-feeding device for feeding the material workpiece from the table to the machining section and for ejecting the machined product workpiece from the machining section to the table. Thus, the rejection of amended claims 20 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) is not supported by Raimondi.

(3) Claims 19 and 23-24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Raimondi (U.S. Patent No. 6,216,572 B1) in view of Makeev et al. (U.S. Patent No. 3,830,121).

The same arguments as explained in connection with the 102(b) rejection are incorporated herein. Neither of the cited references discloses the claimed features. Reconsideration of the rejection is respectfully requested.

(4) In view of the aforementioned amendments and accompanying remarks, Applicant submits that the claims, as herein amended, are in condition for allowance. Applicant requests such action at an early date. If the Examiner believes that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicant's undersigned representative at the telephone number indicated below to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case. If this paper is not timely filed, Applicant respectfully petitions for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such an extension or any other fees that may be due with respect to this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-2866.

Respectfully submitted,
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